

# RECKLESS RALPH'S

## DIME NOVEL ROUNDUP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers. Published by Ralph F. Cummings, Box 75, Fisherville, Mass., U. S. A. Price \$1.00 per year or ten cents a copy.

VOL. 5

FEBRUARY, 1937

NO. 59

### NICK CARTER

By L. H. Lahmon

Route No. 3, Angola, Indiana

After reading Harold C. Holmes article on Nick Carter, I will just write a few words about the first of the Nick Carter Weekly, that I read many years ago. Some of the stories were "Nick Carter and the River Pirates," and it was a story that I'll never forget, as it was a story of the robbery of boats anchored in the New York harbor, by a tough gang of wharf rats and thugs. They would row out to a boat, climb aboard, knock out the watchman, or take two or three of them and clean up the boat, and it got so bad, that Nick Carter was given the job of cleaning them up. Talk about exciting times, Nick sure had them. Under the decks and in the tunnels of the underworld. The cover was the old black and white type, such as Old Cap Collier, Wide A Wake and others of by-gone days. In the picture there was a row boat, tied to a post at the docks, and if my memory holds good after more than forty (40) years, Nick and Chick were getting into the boat, but like Harold C. Holmes article in the Roundup for October, 1936, I did not have many nickels those days. So there were lots of the old Nick Carters I did not have a chance to read. As to large books, "Package 17a" was the largest Nick Carter I ever saw, as it was about the size of the old time "Log Cabin (10c) Library," and I believe it was one of the large size weeklies that Mr. Holmes wrote about. It had more than twice the reading than the early numbers, but I do not know the number of it, it's been so long I hardly remember the story now. Something of a family hate, and killing of the earlier stories were the best when Nick and Chick done the work.

### ANOTHER CONTEST

Conducted by Wm. M. Burns

Here you are fellows. Refresh your memory by going over your novels, and look up the answers to the following questions. First correct, or nearest correct answer wins a Beadles Dime Library in fine condition. The runner-up wins a Beadles Half Dime Library in fine condition. In case of a tie, each tying contestant will win a Dime Library, or a Half Dime Library, as the case may be. Here are the questions: 1. We are all familiar with Beadles Dime Library. Did the house of Beadles ever publish a Library, or Weekly carrying a very similar name? If so, was it published previously to, or after the black and white edition of Beadles Dime Library and what was it named?

2. What author first made Buffalo Bill famous as a fiction character, and in what publication? 3. What other author took over the writing of the Buffalo Bill tales on a large scale, after the first author had stopped writing them?

4. In New York Weekly and other publications there were published many stories, mostly Indian tales, written by Roy St. Ledger. Roy St. Ledger was simply a pen name. Of whom? 5. How high did Beadles Dime Library run, including those published by Ivers? What was the last number? 6. In a number of tales written by Oll Coomes appeared his most famous characters, Old Kit Bandy and his so-called wife, Sabina. Who was Sabina?

7. Several old time dime novel authors are still living. Name at least two.

8. About 1898-1900 Ivers brought out a dime novel called "Popular Series of Fiction, Fancy and Fact."



Some of the tales were "Beetle Nose Ben, the Indian Hater," "Walker the Filibuster," "Spirit Eye, the Indian Captive," "Rippard the Outlaw," etc. These stories all reprints. Reprints of what Library?

9. Was Buck Taylor a real character? If so, what can you say about his real life?

10. What was the real names of "White Beaver," "Night Hawk George," "Billy Blue Eyes," "The Poet Scout," "Buckskin Sam," and "Texas Jack."

11. Most collectors think that Beadle published only one invention tale. This being Edward S. Ellis, "The Huge Hunter; or The Steam Man of the Plains." But there was at least one other invention tale published in Beadles Half Dime Library. A tale of a submarine boat. What was the number and title of this Half Dime.

12. Capt. Mayne Reids' story "Blue Dick; or, The Yellow Chief's Vengeance," was published in at least five different Libraries. Name at least three.

There, fellows, are twelve questions. Some of them may prove to be hard ones to you, but put on your "thinking cap" for a while, and go over your novels, and I am sure that you can answer most, if not all the questions correctly. Ten points for each question answered correctly, five points for a partially answered question. No points whatever for a wrongly answered question. Go to it fellows, and let's see who can be first with a perfect score of 120 points. Do not send your answers to the publisher, but send them directly to Wm. M. Burns, 15 Cottage St., Rockland, Maine. A correct list of answers to the questions will be published along with the winners names in due time, possibly in next issue of Roundup.

## "THE WINNAH"

### Hidden Names Contest

Bob Smeltzer reports the results of his "Hidden Names" Contest, which appeared in our November issue, as follows:

"I am pleased to inform you that it was a nip-and-tuck finish, George French nosing out Arvid Dahlstedt by a single name. In this connection, it is quite interesting to note that when

Dahlstedt came upon Dalton he jotted his own name down. Methinks that due to the similarity of names he inadvertently, although incorrectly, had his own name (Dahlstedt) in mind. Had he got this one correctly it would have been a tie score, although Arvid nailed his solutions first. As it ended, the final score was French 29, Dahlstedt 28. The closest runner-up was Lacey D. Irwin, who came in with a total of 26 names.

"There were 31 hidden names in the writeup, and in their order they were: A Friend, Austin, Cummings, Beck, Burns, Smeltzer, Smith, Miller, Johnson, French, Fries, Holmes, Ball, Caldwell, Marsh, Hardin, Leithead, Mulhall, Singleton, Sawyer, Rawson, Adimare, Dalton, Lillie, Pearson, Grant, Giles, Patten, Tanner, Benners, Parma.

"Although the stated single prize was a perfect Beadle's Dime Library, French and Dahlstedt each received a similar prize, and each of the other contestants a worth-while novel as well."

In Bob's words: "I got a big 'kick' out of the contest, and would like to see other collectors continue the thing. It makes for good fellowship, and what's a few novels among friends?"

A contest might be based on word-making, listing, let us say, a half dozen names of dime novels, or even three or four; then have readers try their hand at composing words from the letters contained in the novel names.

Horatio Alger, Jr. was born on Friday, January 13th, 1834. As a Harvard University graduate he wrote "Ragged Dick," at the age of 34.

Captain Wiley (who was a living personality, hailing from the State of Maine) is pictured on the colored cover of "Tin Top" No. 537, in all his brilliant, peacock regalia. This fact although his death is recorded in No. 504 of Tin Top.

The "news" sleuth-hound tracked down the information that Webster's Dictionary contains the definition of Dime Novel. It is just so, and here is the definition: A term applied to cheap sensational literature.



## From "ON BOOKS AND READING"

Nelson, Doubleday, Inc., N. Y. City

The reason boys love the Nick Carter stories (and this is not as far a jump from great poetry and great prose as it seems) is because they can see themselves in the hero, and the reason they hate so many of the books they are told to read is because they are too remote from what they know about life, and from what they hope life is going to be like when they get out to see more of it.

In one of his most engaging books, "A Plea for Old Cap Collier" (and the works of Old Cap Collier, if you have never heard of them, belong on the shelf with "Tombstone Dick," "Redtop Rube," "The Desperate Dozen," "Arizona Joe," and "Old Grizzly Adams, the Bear Tamer") Irvin S. Cobb makes a plea for the dime novel or the nickel library.

"If I had a boy (we paraphrase Mr. Cobb) about twelve to fourteen years old, I would give him the best of the collected works of Nick Carter, Old Cap Collier and Frank Reade. I would buy him a certain paper-back volume dealing with the lives of the James Boys; then I would say to him: 'Here my son, is something for you; a rare and precious gift. Read these stories openly. Never mind the crude style in which most of them are written. Read them for the thrills that are in them. Read them, remembering that if this country had not a pioneer brand of Buckskin Sam's and Deadwood Dick's we should have had no native school of dime novelists. Read them for their brisk and stirring movement; for the spirit of outdoor adventure and life which crowds them; for their swift but logical procession of sequences; for the phrases of pioneer Americanism they rawly but graphically portray, and also for their moral value. Read them along with your Cooper's and your Ivanhoe and your Mayne Reid's. Read them through, and perhaps some day, if fortune is kinder to you than it ever was to your father, with a background behind you, and a vision before you, you may be inspired to sit down and write a dime novel of your own almost good enough to be mentioned in the same breath with the two greatest adventure stories—dollar size dime novels is what they really were, that ever were written; written, both of them, by sure

enough writing men, who, I'm sure, must have based their moods and their modes upon the memories of the dime novels which they read when they were boys of your age. I refer you, my son, to the two books entitled 'Huckleberry Finn,' and 'Treasure Island.'"

## WHEN THIS HAPPENS

When Joe Crowfoot orders spinach  
And rides roosters in the rain,  
I will sell my sister's slippers  
To the communists of Spain.  
When the perfume of fair Inza  
Is the juice of onion tops,  
Then Old Broadbrim will be dancing  
With the corner traffic cops.  
—Wm. Burton McCafferty

## PARTIAL LIST OF MEMBERS FOR 1937

- Nos.
5. George N. Beck, 2114 Scott St., Davenport, Iowa.
  6. W. C. Miller, 922 W. Gramercy St., San Antonio, Texas.
  11. J. D. Hardin, 634 S. Broad Street, Burlington, N. C.
  12. George French, 121 W. Passaic Ave., Bloomfield, N. J.
  16. Charles Bragin, 1525 W. 12th St., Brooklyn, N. Y.
  19. J. Reischmann, 5619 Henderson St., Chicago, Ill. (was a member of 1936, too)
  23. Charles H. Austin, 2241 N. 29th St., Philadelphia, Pa.
  31. C. B. Hamilton, 3 Paris St., Norway, Maine.
  34. Edward Le Blanc, 112 Union St., Fall River, Mass.
  35. Herbert Leitstein, 8733 Bay 16th St., Brooklyn, N. Y.
  39. H. O. Rawson, 53 Channing St., Worcester, Mass.
  49. W. E. Bennett, 2305 Indiana, Kansas City, Mo. (new collector)
  51. Harold C. Holmes, 134 Temple St., New Haven, Conn.
  58. M. E. Marsh, 812 No. Cayuga St., Ithaca, N. Y.
  60. Albert Johansson, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

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